

State Rehabilitation Council
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
510 East 12th Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Iowa State Rehabilitation Council



**2002—2003
Annual Report**



From the Chair

Sherry O. Becker

December 31, 2003

To the Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack, Governor, State of Iowa:

The Iowa State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is pleased to present to you the 2003 Annual Report.

The SRC continues to work closely with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), Department of Education, to improve and expand employment services for Iowans with disabilities. The working relationship between the SRC and DVRS continues to change and improve as we focus on our role and responsibilities under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

By conducting a needs assessment of people with disabilities around the state, we were able to advise DVRS on the strategic plan. In partnership with DVRS, the Council will continue to develop and review goals. Consumer satisfaction is an important part of our mission. Working together, we can improve the quality of life and economic outcomes of Iowans with disabilities.

This year the SRC will be:

- Assuring services are available to enable consumers to achieve their employment goals;
- Assessing the need for and possibly developing local advisory committees;
- Developing an improvement plan for the Council; and
- Conducting a consumer satisfaction assessment to recommend changes or improvements in service delivery.

Sincerely,

Sherry O. Becker
Chair



From the Division Administrator

Stephen A. Wooderson

December 31, 2003

To the Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack, Governor, State of Iowa:

Federal Fiscal Year 2003 has been a year of significance for the Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS). Due to increases in referrals and costs in providing rehabilitation services, waiting lists were implemented in May of 2002. This meant that large numbers of clients were placed on waiting lists. Beginning in November of 2002, the process of removing clients from the waiting lists and providing services began. By February of 2003, all clients who were classified as most significantly disabled were being served; however, all other new referrals still were placed on a waiting list. Waiting lists historically impact referrals, staff morale and outcomes. I am pleased to say, however, that the staff of DVRS continued to provide high quality services and meet the needs of those we served during a very difficult year.

We ended Fiscal Year 2003 with 2,086 successful placements into competitive employment. Although this represents a decrease from the previous year, the number was due to the waiting lists. In the positive side, DVRS had increases from the previous year in the percentage of persons with significant disabilities being served, as well as the percentage of competitive employment outcomes that were for individuals with significant disabilities.

In 2003, DVRS planned and implemented new programs and initiatives, expanded its collaborative efforts with employers, consumers and community-based organizations, and strengthened its partnerships with the State Rehabilitation Council, public and private service providers, and with state and other government agencies.

The DVRS staff is dedicated to providing quality service leading toward quality outcomes. We are dedicated to challenging old beliefs, meeting higher standards and expectations, working more closely together, improving communications, utilizing our resources wisely, and celebrating our achievements.

Sincerely,

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL
REHABILITATION SERVICES

Stephen A. Wooderson, Administrator



State Rehabilitation Council

2002 - 2003

Mission

“Iowans in partnership with DVRS to assure that people with disabilities meet their employment, independence, and economic goals.”

Introduction

The Iowa State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is a body of citizens, in partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), appointed by Governor Thomas Vilsack, under the authority of the Rehabilitation Services Act of 1973, as amended, to provide guidance and advice on issues impacting rehabilitation in the State of Iowa. The Council reviews, analyzes, and advises the Iowa DVRS regarding the state’s vocational rehabilitation programs.

Establishment of the SRC

The Iowa State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was established in 1993 as mandated by the 1992 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act. The SRC was originally established as an advisory council, and later the name was changed with the 1998 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Council Duties

Review, analyze, and advise the Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) regarding the performance of the responsibilities of DVRS under Title I, particularly responsibilities relating to:

- Eligibility;
- The extent, scope and effectiveness of services provided; and functions performed by DVRS that affect, or that potentially affect, the ability of individuals with disabilities to achieve employment outcomes under Title I.

In partnership with DVRS:

- Develop, agree to, and review State goals and priorities in the State Plan.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and submit reports of progress to the Commissioner in accordance with the State Plan.

Advise DVRS regarding the activities authorized to be carried out and assist in the preparation of the State Plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations required by Title I.

Conduct a review and analysis (to the extent possible) of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with:

- The functions performed by DVRS;
- Vocational rehabilitation services provided by State VR agencies and other public and private entities responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under the Vocational Rehabilitation Act; and
- Employment outcomes achieved by eligible individuals receiving services under Title I, including the availability of health and other employment benefits in connection with such employment outcomes.

Prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and the Commissioner on the status of vocational rehabilitation programs operated within the State, and make the report available to the public.

To avoid duplication of efforts and enhance the number of individuals served, coordinate activities with the activities of other councils within the State, including:

- The Statewide Independent Living Council;
- The advisory panel of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- The State Developmental Disabilities Council of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act;
- The State Mental Health Planning Council; and
- The State Workforce Investment Board.

Provide for coordination and the establishment of working relationships between DVRS and the Statewide Independent Living Council and centers for independent living within the State.

Perform such other functions, consistent with the purpose of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, Title I, as the State Rehabilitation Council determines to be appropriate, that are comparable to the other functions performed by the Council.



Membership of the SRC

The Council must be composed of at least 15 members who are appointed by Governor Thomas Vilsack. Membership includes representatives from:

- ◆ Statewide Independent Living Council;
- ◆ The Parent Training and Information Center;
- ◆ Client Assistance Program;
- ◆ Qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor;
- ◆ Community rehabilitation program service providers;
- ◆ Four representatives of business, industry, and labor;
- ◆ Disability groups that include: individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory, and mental disabilities; and representatives of individuals with disabilities who have difficulty representing themselves;
- ◆ Current or former applicants for, or recipients of, vocational rehabilitation services;
- ◆ State educational agency responsible for the public education of students with disabilities;
- ◆ State Workforce Investment Board;
- ◆ Administrator of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services as an ex-officio, nonvoting member.

Activities of the SRC

(October 1, 2002 – September 30, 2003)

Public Hearings

When a change is made in the State Plan the Agency is working under, public hearings must be held across the state. These hearings are a joint effort of DVRS and the SRC. This year DVRS reached an agreement with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding the interactions of the two agencies. Public hearings were conducted in Fort Dodge, Des Moines, and Cedar Rapids. A total of 15 persons attended the hearings.

Committees

During the last Federal Fiscal Year, the SRC had three very active standing committees in addition to the Executive Committee. These committees provided a wide range of services, research, and support to the Council. Each committee consisted of at least two members, with many of them having DVRS staff support.

Legislative Reception

The SRC membership hosted a legislative reception to educate members of the Iowa Legislature and others about DVRS and its services. The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) co-sponsored the event. Sixty legislators attended the reception.

State Plan Goals and Priorities Review

The SRC is active in reviewing and approving the Agency's "Goals and Priorities" report that is required by SRC as a part of the State Plan. During the last fiscal year the following activities took place in an effort to accomplish the goals outlined in the Agency's State Plan.

Goal 1. Utilizing awareness and outreach strategies recommended by the DVRS Cultural Diversity Committee DVRS will:

- a. Continue to monitor minority referrals to ensure they represent at least 5% of the active caseload.**
- b. Aim to achieve a rehabilitation rate for minorities at least equal to that of non-minorities.**

Minorities make up 7.1% of the DVRS caseload. The 2000 U.S. Census reports that 3.7% of the population of Iowa is a minority. The rehabilitation rate for non-minorities was 55%, but that for minorities was 45%, or a ratio of 82. The DVRS Diversity Committee continues to study the disparity in rehabilitation rates seeking ways to

improve the retention and successful closure of minorities with disabilities. The Agency met the RSA Standard and came closer to meeting its own goal this year.

Goal 2. DVRS will actively participate in the implementation of the Workforce Investment Act in Iowa.

Many of the DVRS staff are co-located with other Workforce partners and regularly interact with them to improve the services to individuals with disabilities. Although we know of only one staff member who is a voting member of a regional board, there are a number who are non-voting members. Staff attends most meetings of the regional boards, even when they are not members.

Goal 3. DVRS will maintain at least one counselor in each area office who will serve as the Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing group (RCDHH.) This group will advise the Agency on the purchase and training of communication devices for the Deaf (TTYs) and on other issues related to the provision of services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

The RCDHH meets on a regular basis to share the latest information and strategies for services provision to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. During the past year they have developed a relationship with an audiologist who teaches and does research at the University of Iowa. She has agreed to provide consultation on cases where counselors have questions regarding the appropriateness of the recommendations on hearing aids being made for their clients. Most of these questions revolve around whether a digital aid is needed, or whether a much cheaper analog aid would do just as good a job for that client on the job. The RCDHH group has developed and implemented a curriculum for TTY users. They are taking responsibility to see that their area office and all service units under it have staff that knows how to use the TTY.

DVRS and Deaf Services Commission of Iowa collaborated in sponsoring sixteen sessions of *Deaf, Deaf World* training throughout the state in FFY 03. The purpose of the sessions is to illustrate the cultural experience of what it might be like to live in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing world where the dominant mode of communication (visual) is different from the majority culture that uses spoken language. *Deaf, Deaf World* provides hands on experience for participants. Communicating through the spoken language is not allowed, but rather participants are encouraged to use whatever skills and ingenuity they have available to get their information, needs, or requests across to training leaders.

Goal 4. DVRS will develop, disseminate, and monitor methods and procedures to retain clients until they become rehabilitated. The goal will be that DVRS meets the requirements established in the RSA Standards and Indicators.

Based on FFY03 data, DVRS has met or exceeded all of the Standards and Indicators, except for two. We did not meet 1.1, which requires us to equal or exceed the number of successful closures in the previous fiscal year. We also failed to meet the standard of 55.8% for the Rehabilitation Rate. We expected these outcomes because of the imposition of the waiting list and a concerted effort to close cases that were no longer

viable from the caseload. On the bright side, we did exceed the standard for services to minorities. This is something we have been working toward for several years.

(Goal 1. of this plan relates to how we are trying to make improvements in that area.) A significant quality assurance effort is in the planning and development stages. We expect this to take several years to be fully developed, tested, and to show an effect in DVRS cases.

Goal 5. Through increased collaboration and cooperation with the network of mental health providers DVRS will increase the successful rehabilitation outcomes of persons with mental illness by 3% and maintain that increase.

Since DVRS entered the waiting list in May 2002, there has been little opportunity to specially target disability groups, since for a significant period of time everyone was going onto a waiting list. Those coming off the waiting list must do so by date of eligibility, not type of disability. The fact that RSA has changed the disability coding structure makes it very difficult to compare previous data with that collected for FFY02 and before. We will establish a new baseline with the new disability codes and will measure our progress next year.

Goal 6. Provide technical assistance to at least 10 CRPs (Community Rehabilitation Programs) to assist them in improving the quality of supported employment services they provide to clients of DVRS.

DVRS believes that it may assist CRPs to provide quality services by knowing actually what they are doing and what it costs.

Using data about the cost of various services collected by a group of Community Rehabilitation Programs, DVRS and CRP personnel developed, trained staff in and implemented the Menu of Services system. In this system, the client and counselor will pick just those services needed to be purchased, not a pre-packaged bundle.

Goal 7. Increase by 4 the number of Transition Alliance Projects (TAPs) to increase services to transitioning students moving into the workforce.

Recruitment and retention of TAPs became significantly harder this year because of the introduction of the waiting list. Generally TAPs are aimed at the less significantly disabled. Several school districts expressed concern that they might not have students eligible and off the waiting list to justify running the program. DVRS has attempted to provide them with data that gives some indication of the numbers they are probably looking at. DVRS appears to be meeting our goal for this year.

Waiting List

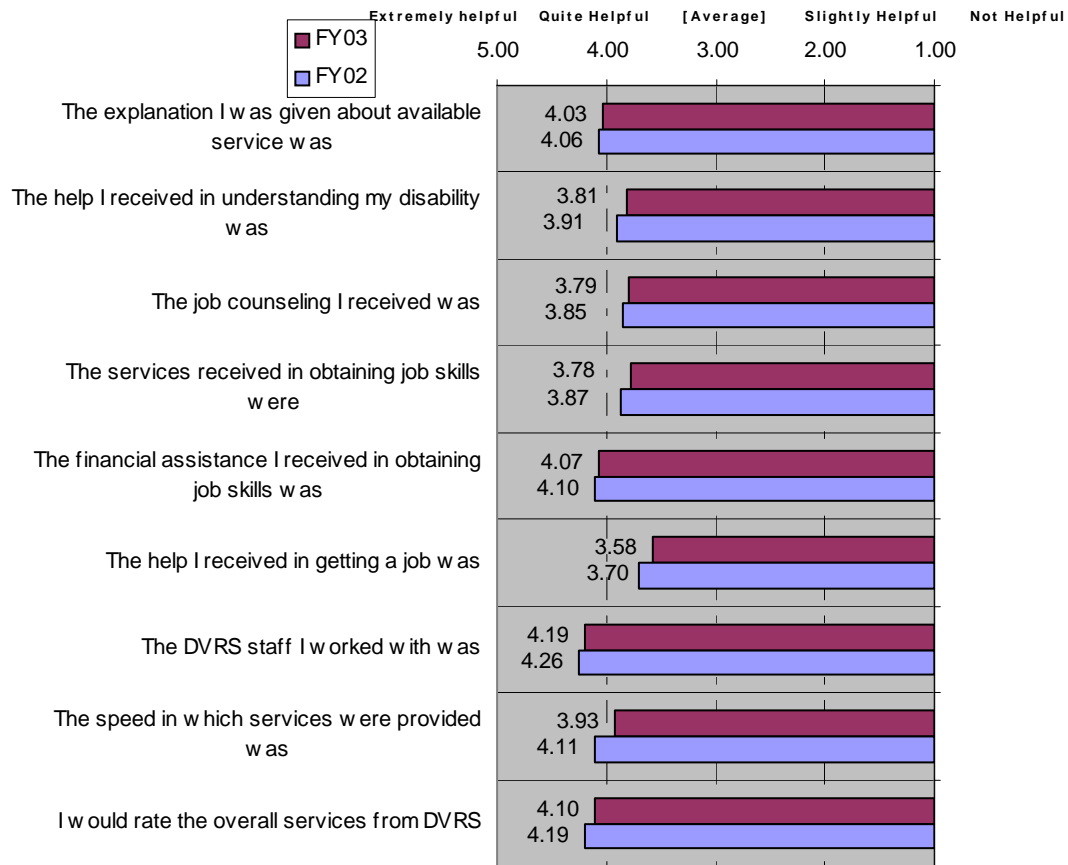
Through effective management of resources, DVRS was able to remove all individuals with Most Significant Disabilities (MSD) off the waiting list and begin serving new MSD clients as soon as they were found eligible. Starting in February 2003, each month several hundred have been removed from the Significantly Disabled (SD) waiting list and moved to services.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

In Fiscal Year 2003, the State Rehabilitation Council continued conducting a Client Satisfaction Survey. The survey had been developed in Fiscal Year 2001 and distributed at the end of the year. The Council changed this process in Fiscal Year 2002 to allow for the surveys to be mailed out at the end of the month in which a client case record was closed. This change was implemented to increase the response rate. The overall response rate in Fiscal Year 2003 was twenty-two percent, down from twenty-eight percent last year. Thirty-four percent of the employed (successfully rehabilitated) clients returned the survey, and fourteen percent of the unsuccessfully rehabilitated client surveys were returned. Both were lower than the previous year.

Clients' average scores were significantly higher for those cases closed as successfully rehabilitated as compared to those closed not successfully rehabilitated. Compared to last year, the average scores on the individual items were little changed.

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results - Successfully Rehabilitated



Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results - Unsuccessfully Rehabilitated



Case Services Manual

With the understanding and encouragement of the SRC this year, DVRS undertook a revision of its Case Services Manuals, moving from a very prescriptive system to one in which counselor judgment and planning play the major role. All of the members received a copy of the new manual and also receive regular updates. The new manual allows DVRS to dramatically revise the role of the supervisor in the casework process.

IRSS

Progress on the Iowa Rehabilitation Services System (IRSS) was significantly delayed due to spending restrictions placed on DVRS by the Department of Management. Work continued on the request for proposals (RFP) for the development and implementation of IRSS with the Information Technology Department and the Department of General Services. The RFP was released on May 5, 2003. Eight consulting firms submitted proposals, and Quilogy has been awarded the contract and has begun development work. Mr. Frank de Lathouder, of Quality Consulting, Inc. (QCI), was hired under a staff

augmentation contract to help organize and administer the IRSS project. QCI is the company that helped with the technical assessment and detail design phases of IRSS. A steering team of 29 staff meets regularly and represents all classifications and area offices. Members participate on one of four committees: Functionality, Communications, Job Duties, and Field Support. The overall team has a charge to "Lead DVRS through the transition to IRSS by involving staff to define, understand, and re-engineer ways of serving our clients."



DVRS Leadership in the Nation

Fiscal year 2003 was a year for national leadership for the Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Ticket to Work

The SRC Chair Sherry O. Becker and Dr. Ralph L. Childers, one of the DVRS staff supports for the SRC, were two of approximately forty persons invited by the Ticket to Work Advisory Panel to participate in the National Ticket to Work Employment Network Summit. Both also presented at an Iowa Employment Network Summit designed to encourage additional entities to apply to become approved ENs. The SRC has been very supportive of Iowa DVRS' leadership role in the Ticket to Work program.

Iowa Paths

Iowa Paths is a five-year systems change project working to expand employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities who receive public assistance. The project, funded by RSA and administered by DVRS, is a cooperative effort between the Departments of Education, Human Services, Workforce Development, Blind, Human Rights and the Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council. These agencies have collaborated to create multi-agency working groups at the state and local levels to identify and reduce barriers to competitive employment for the targeted individuals. Since 1998 this initiative has been (1) collecting qualitative data on local barriers and assets through focus groups and interviews; (2) providing funding to local communities to develop and implement strategic plans to remove these barriers; (3) bringing expert assistance and "toolkits" to local communities to develop the capacity to enhance local collaboration through training on systems-building, community-based leadership, and community asset development. As a result of the lessons learned from these projects, the State partners have developed a Memorandum of Agreement designed to establish an ongoing commitment to collaboration at all levels of service delivery. The MOA creates a forum for sharing current and future best practices of collaboration among partners who are working to strengthen employment services to Iowans with disabilities.

DVRS Leadership in Iowa

In 2002 – 2003, DVRS undertook new ventures to provide innovative services to persons with disabilities

Iowa Excellence

Iowa DVRS was one of the first agencies to participate in Iowa Excellence and completed a two-year reassessment in 2003. The Iowa Excellence process covers issues involving the approach and deployment of (1) collaborative leadership, (2) long-range thinking, (3) customer focus, (4) data-based decision, (5) employee participation, and (6) continuous improvement. This report included results data showing three-year trends with the Federal Standards and Indicators. The partnership with the SRC assisted DVRS in identifying key data across the spectrum of management decisions. Of vital importance was the use of the customer satisfaction survey data and the performance of the CRP/DVRS partnership on the Federal Standards and Indicators.

Accountable Government Act

The Accountable Government Act (AGA) is a new approach to governing that transcends politics and reflects Iowa's values. The AGA establishes a comprehensive and consistent framework of best management practices that have been proven in the private sector and includes: Strategic Planning, Performance Measurement, Results-Oriented Budgeting, Performance Reporting, Performance Audits, Performance Contracting, and Return on Investment. As a result of the AGA, Iowa DVRS volunteered as a lead agency in implementing the responsive accountable government principles by sharing with the CRP/DVRS partnership data that reflects the partnership performance in relationship to the Federal Standards and Indicators. Performance on the Federal Standards and Indicators, and the performance of other partnerships, will continue to drive program improvement efforts to produce better outcomes and information for Iowans with disabilities.

Menu of Services

For the past three years, DVRS and Community Rehabilitation Programs have been working on a collaborative effort to develop a new way to purchase services for clients from the Community Rehabilitation Programs. During FY 03, a pilot project was conducted with twelve Community Rehabilitation Programs. Costs for the Menu of

Services items were tracked. During the months of July and August, six regional training sessions were presented to DVRS staff and Community Rehabilitation Program staff on the Menu of Services and the implementation of the Menu. On October 1, 2003, the Menu of Services was implemented. The Menu of Services allows the client and counselor to pick and choose services based on the need of the client. This allows for a more individualized plan and also allows for more flexibility in service provision. The Menu of Services also allows for identification of quality indicators so that the client and counselor can monitor if services are being delivered as agreed upon.

Iowa Youth Leadership Forum

In partnership with the Iowa Commission of Persons with Disabilities and the Iowa Department for the Blind, DVRS sponsors the Iowa Youth Leadership Forum (YLF). The YLF is an innovative, intensive five-day training program for high school juniors and seniors with disabilities. It includes career awareness and leadership development information to assist young people with disabilities to reach their potential. The training is presented in a fun, entertaining, and educational format.

The Women's Educational Equity Act Resource Center in Massachusetts found two years after youth with disabilities leave secondary school, only 52% of the young men and 32% of the young women have jobs. YLF graduates that have been out of secondary school for two years show an employment rate of 40% with another 56% attending post-secondary career training.

Entrepreneurs with Disabilities

The Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program is a joint venture of the Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), Iowa Department of Economic Development, and the Iowa Department for the Blind. Recognizing that businesses often fail due to lack of knowledge regarding business operations and lack of capital, this program is designed to enhance the technical knowledge and skills of the budding entrepreneur. The investment to the individual with a disability who qualifies for the program can be measured by sustained outcomes and economies of scale.

During Fiscal Year 03, the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program served 58 new applicants and 29 total business starts or expansions. The total cost of expenditures per phase of development was:

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| • Phase 1 Feasibility | \$29,469.75 |
| • Phase 2 Business Planning & Technical Assistance | \$83,193.85 |
| • Phase 2 Monitoring | \$3,919.40 |
| • Financial Assistance | \$233,206.28 |
| • Total Expenditures 10/1/02 –9/30/03 | \$349,789.28 |

The financial assistance provided to individuals with disabilities for business starts leveraged loans with commercial institutions. Each business determines the profitability via input, output and consumer driven profits. According to end of year reports, 53 DVRS cases were closed as being self-employed at a total weekly income of \$14,631 or \$276.06 per individual. However, the weekly amounts are rather deceptive since there were some businesses that reported over \$1000/week as income.

DVRS Partnerships in Education

As a division of the Department of Education, Iowa DVRS continues to serve students with disabilities at all levels of secondary and postsecondary education. Partnering with education professionals is an important activity of the division to effectively provide rehabilitation services.

Iowa High School Districts

Recognizing the need to assist youth with disabilities transition into the world of work, Iowa DVRS assigns a rehabilitation counselor to every high school in Iowa. High schools refer students with disabilities for vocational rehabilitation services in their junior or senior year.

Iowa Regents, Private and Community Colleges

Iowa DVRS maintains a staffed office on the campus of thirteen of the fifteen community colleges in Iowa and maintains intensive service with the three regents institutions. DVRS college counselors work closely with college personnel to ensure that DVRS students with disabilities receive necessary services.

Transition Outcomes

The Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) proposes a five-year project to create a community-wide system of inclusion, support, and engagement for school age youth with disabilities as they transition into their adult roles in the community. This will be accomplished by developing a state plan supporting communities to more systematically identify, recruit, involve, and utilize the wide array of assets available locally to support school-age youth with disabilities who are transitioning from public school to higher education or employment. This project builds upon ongoing collaboration between the following state partners for an RSA Systems Change grant and a DOL Work Incentive Grant: Department for the Blind, Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Department of Human Rights, Department of Human Services, Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council and Iowa Workforce Development.

To meet the goal of the grant, the project will implement resource mapping in the fifteen Transition Alliance Projects (TAP) in the state. Mapping strategies will focus on local

assets and resources already present in the community and then build upon that information to enhance the current system.

Local demonstrations will allow local communities to access support and technical assistance to develop service flow models for school age youth with disabilities who use transition services. The models will emphasize linking community resources to minimize duplicative efforts and address gaps and needed services.

The success of this project will depend on collaborative efforts across multiple agencies. While Iowa has proven to be successful in partnership efforts in the past, this grant will provide additional collaborative opportunities that will result in:

1. Increased academic achievement among school-age youth with disabilities linking it more closely to personal goals and interests, enriching the peer and adult role models who can represent academic achievement as desirable, and coordinating it with work experiences;
2. Increased satisfactory, gainful employment among school-age youth with disabilities through a wide variety of employment-related experiences;
3. Increased community involvement in the achievements of school-age youth with disabilities through enriching, coordinating, and expanding the local supports available to them;
4. Increased civic involvement of school-age youth with disabilities through more effectively engaging them in work, civic, and self-advocating activities in conjunction with community-wide resource systems; and
5. Increased community-wide measures of social wealth.

Feedback from the State Resource Team will drive the development of a cross-agency multiple-year Statewide Strategic Plan to improve transition outcomes for youth with disabilities. Innovative strategies for blending or braiding funding will seek to close service gaps and make the best use of existing and new resources. Sustainability will be assured by sixteen TAPs that will be able to share their processes and information with other entities, such as the Youth Advisory Councils of the Regional Work Investment Boards, which will serve as intermediaries in other communities in the state. Evidence-based practices in transition will be used as the basis for developing quality indicators for subsequent intermediary groups.

Transition Alliance Programs (TAP)

The Transition Alliance Program is a joint venture between the Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and local school districts, Area Education Agencies, or community colleges. This joint program assists individuals with disabilities transition from school to post-secondary pursuits by providing career exploration, paid and unpaid work experience, college planning, vocational training, and other related services. The expectation for participants is that they will become employed upon completion of the TAP program.

In Fiscal Year 03, DVRS successfully rehabilitated 62 students. The average hourly wage was \$8.15/hour on average working 34.5 hours per week, generating an average weekly income of \$281.18. There remain approximately 800 students participating in TAPs across the state in fifteen different locations.

Due to staff capacity issues and restrictions in funding, no additional TAPs were added this fiscal year. Instead, TAPs were encouraged to enter into consortia so that the number of contracts remained at a manageable level. There have been requests from other districts to enter into an agreement with DVRS to provide TAPs; however, the staff capacity issue remains a limiting factor in being able to expand.

Iowa Department of Education

DVRS and the Bureau of Children, Family and Community Services (BCFCS) collaborate extensively on meeting the needs of students with disabilities. DVRS is a member of the Special Education Advisory Panel, which is composed of educators, parents, students, and interested community members. DVRS and BCFCS developed an interdepartmental agreement to enhance collaboration and communication at the local level in serving students as they transition from school to post-school activities.

Olmstead Real Choices Executive Order

The Council is assisting DVRS in the identification of policies, actions, and processes that could be carried out in ways that will encourage services being provided in the least restrictive environment possible. Within the Department of Education, the Division has taken the lead in developing the strategies to move Olmstead ideals forward throughout the whole of the Department of Education.

DVRS Partnerships with Iowa Communities

Iowa DVRS continues to strengthen and expand services to Iowans with disabilities by establishing solid partnerships with local community programs.

Community Rehabilitation Programs

DVRS continues to work closely with the Community Rehabilitation Programs and to maintain a close partnership to insure clients are provided quality services in a timely manner. DVRS continues to hold regional meetings and to have a Community Rehabilitation Program Advisory Board to assist in providing feedback to the Agency on how issues are communicated and presented to the Community Rehabilitation Programs.

Last year a private contractor held eight statewide forums with CRP staff to discuss issues of interest to DVRS management. This information was shared with area office supervisors, and strategies were discussed to improve communication with their local Community Rehabilitation Programs. This feedback was also used to assist in the development of reporting forms for the Menu of Services process.

Iowa County System

Over the years, DVRS has established contractual partnerships with one-third of Iowa's counties to increase or improve services to clients with mental retardation and mental illness. Through these partnerships Iowa DVRS has explored new methods of service delivery, trial methods for transportation in local areas, increased collaboration with local school districts, coordination of community programs and a number of other service issues. DVRS continues to explore opportunities to improve services through the county system. Most recently DVRS administration initiated a series of meetings with the Iowa State Association of Counties and their partners to act as a steering committee to work toward resolution on funding and programmatic issues.

DVRS Continuous Quality Improvement

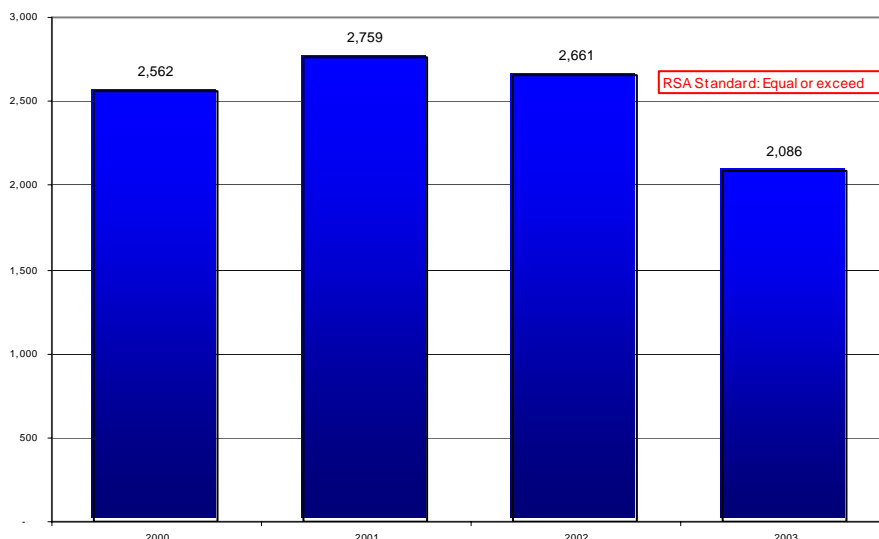
For the past three years, Iowa DVRS has seen steady and significant improvement in successful outcomes.

DVRS continues to see an increase in services to individuals with most significant disabilities. Average Hourly Earnings for clients who enter competitive employment exceeded the federal standard for the last three years. After rehabilitation, a majority of DVRS clients consistently show their own earnings as their primary source of support.

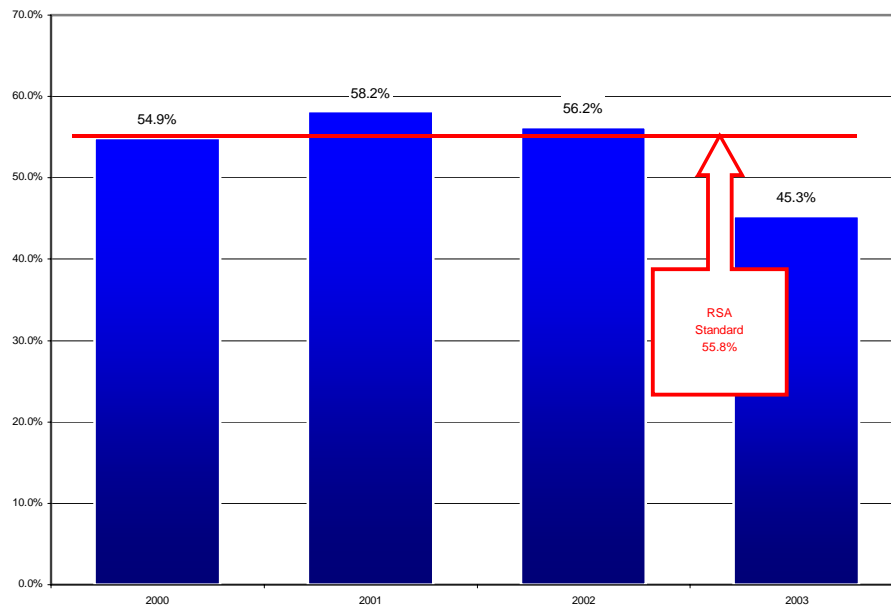
RSA Performance Standards and Indicators

VR Standard 1 = Employment Outcomes

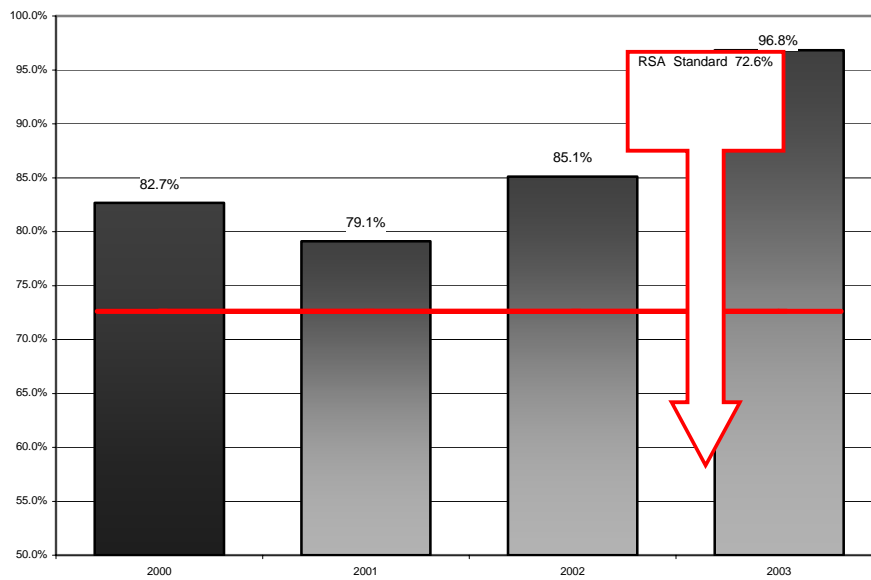
1.1 Number of Employment Outcomes



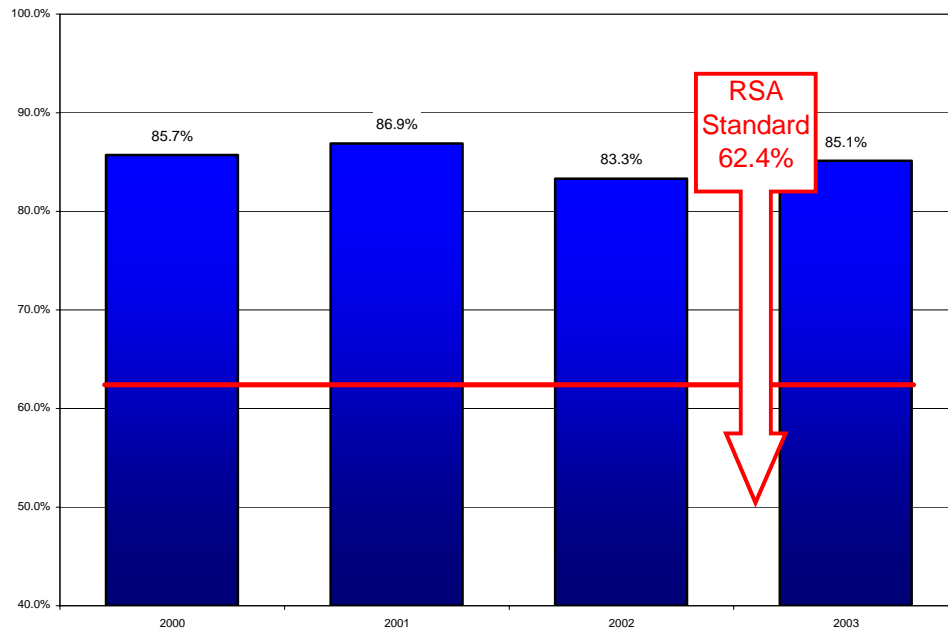
1.2 Percent of Successfully Employed



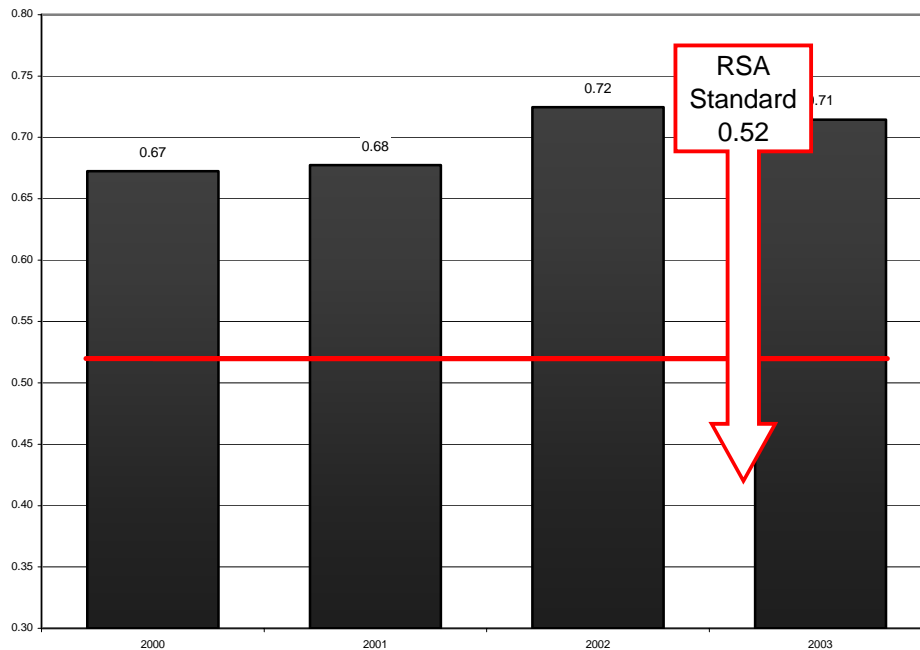
1.3 Percent of Employed Competitively



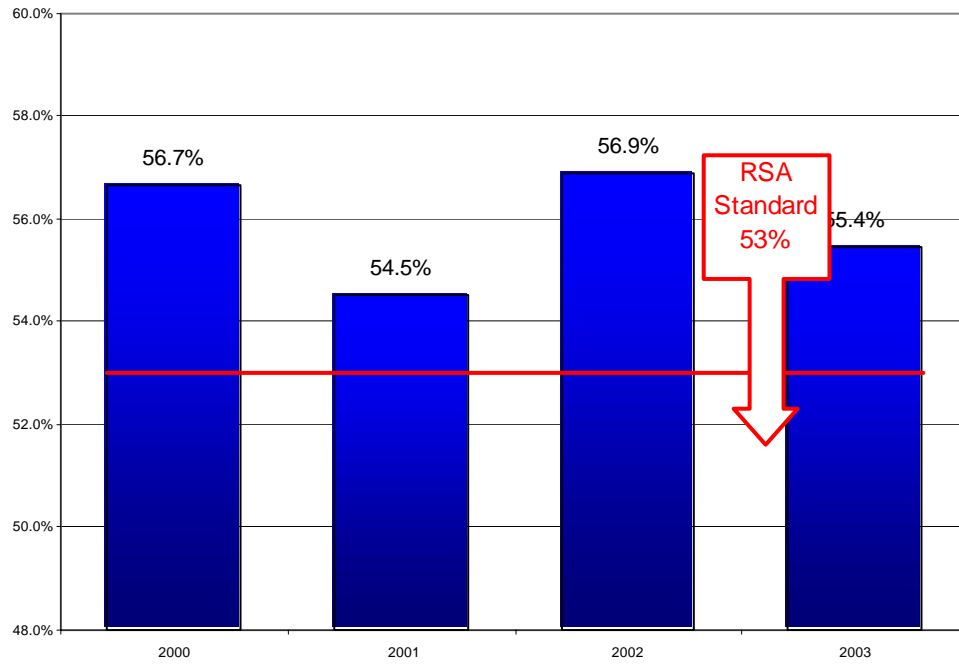
1.4 Percent of Individuals With Significant Disabilities



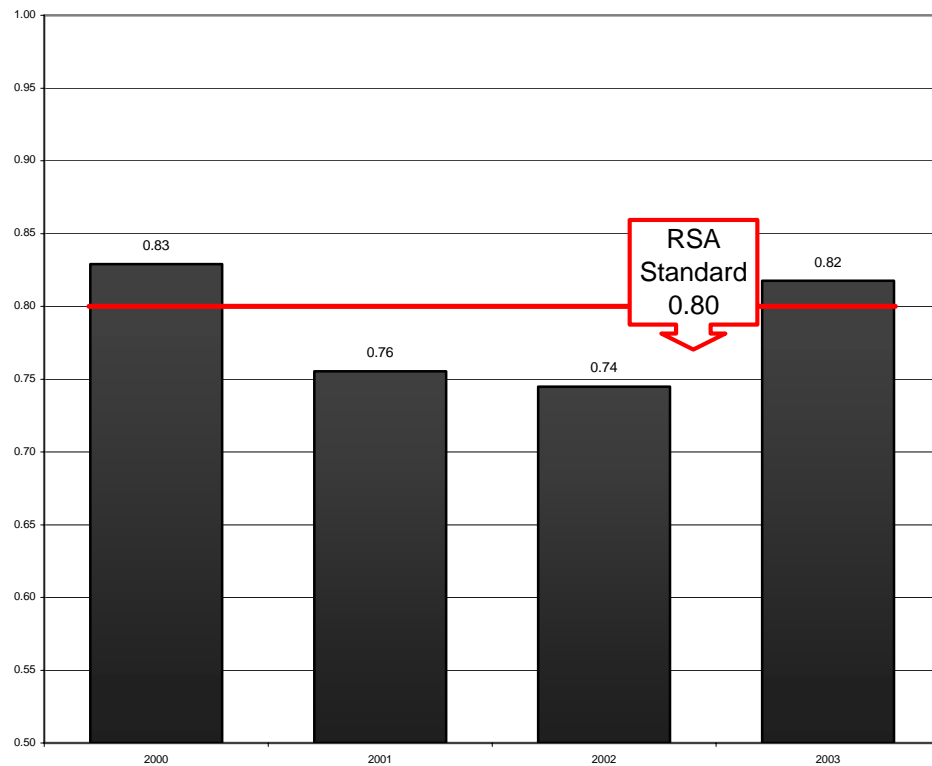
1.5 Earnings as a Ratio to the State Average Hourly Earnings



1.6 Self-Support at Closure Compared to the Figure at Application



2.1 Minorities as a Ratio to the Service Rate for Non-Minorities



SRC Member Biographies

2002 - 2003

Kathryn Baumann-Reese

Ms. Baumann-Reese is serving her second term on the SRC. She lives in Des Moines and serves as the Administrator of the Deaf Services Commission of Iowa, Department of Human Rights. She represents disability groups on the SRC.

Sherry O. Becker

Ms. Becker lives with her husband, Tim, and their family in Mason City. Sherry represents disability advocacy groups on the SRC. She is in her second term with the Council. Ms. Becker's interest in rehabilitation is not only personal, but also professional. As a rehabilitation counselor, Sherry works at NIVC, a community rehabilitation partner with DVRS.

David Bertling

Mr. Bertling resides in Mt. Pleasant and represents business and industry on the SRC. David is serving his second term on the SRC. He is an independent business person who has enjoyed hiring people with disabilities. Mr. Bertling also has a daughter with a disability.

Dennis Dykstra

Mr. Dykstra lives in Des Moines and serves as an Administrative Consultant in the Bureau of Children, Family, and Community Services, Iowa Department of Education. His membership represents the state education agency that is responsible for the public education of students with disabilities. Dennis will serve on the SRC through June of 2005.

Lisa Heddens

Ms. Heddens is the Family Support Coordinator for the Parent Training and Information Center of Iowa (PTI), which is a federally-funded grant of the U.S. Department of Education which advocates on behalf of children and their families under the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). She represents PTI on the SRC. Lisa's background experience is in elementary education and as an advocate with Iowa Protection and Advocacy, as the Project PRIDE and Partners in Policymaking Coordinator. Lisa resides in Ames, Iowa, with her husband, Jeff, and their two children, Makenzie, 14, and Paul, 9, who has Down Syndrome.

Harlietta Helland

Ms. Helland is the Client Assistance Program (CAP) representative to the SRC. As the CAP representative, she has no term limits. Harlietta has served on the SRC since 1995 and is currently serving as Chair. Ms. Helland's office is in Des Moines; however, she serves the entire state of Iowa and travels frequently. Ms. Helland resides in Marshalltown.

[Terry L. Johnson](#)

Mr. Johnson of Jefferson, Iowa, was appointed to the SRC in 2003. He is the CEO of Genesis Development, a rehabilitation organization. His 30 years in the disability field has led to many experiences and interests in the needs of people with disabilities. Mr. Johnson represents community rehabilitation programs on the SRC.

[Thomas Jolas](#)

Mr. Jolas is a new appointee of the SRC. He is an attorney as well as a partner in RE/MAX Results Reality in Mason City. He is a former Deputy Director of the Iowa Department of Economic Development and a former Mayor of Mason City. He represents business, labor and industry on the SRC.

[Karen Keninger](#)

Ms. Keninger is a Program Administrator at the Iowa Library for the Blind. Karen has been blind since birth and also has a physical disability. Ms. Keninger is beginning her second term on the SRC. She has worked for the Iowa Department for the Blind for six years. Karen served as a Rehabilitation Consultant for five of those years.

[Raynard \(Ray\) Manning](#)

Mr. Manning is in his second year of the first term as an appointee to the SRC. He is a DVRS Counselor in the Iowa City Area Office. He represents VR counselors. Ray is one of three VR Regents' University caseload counselors. He is responsible for the delivery and coordination of rehabilitation services for VR clients who are enrolled at the University of Iowa. Ray arrived in Iowa from Texas in 1967 as a freshman at the University of Iowa via a full football scholarship. He played tight end for the "Hawks" as a starter during his four-year undergraduate tenure. He received a BS degree in Science Education (Zoology) in 1971 and an MA in Rehabilitation Counseling in 1976 from the University of Iowa.

[Marsha Mott](#)

Ms. Mott is in her first term as an appointee to the SRC. She lives in Clear Lake with her husband, Russ, and family. She is beginning her eighth year as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor in the Mason City Area Office. She has a general caseload and is the office Transition Counselor. Marsha will represent VR counselors.

[Allan Oberlander](#)

Mr. Oberlander began his tenure on the SRC in 2000. He resides in Des Moines and represents business and industry on the SRC. Allan is an architect with RDG of Des Moines.

[Donald Rowen](#)

Mr. Rowen is a new appointee to the SRC. He represents labor. Mr. Rowen has worked in the labor movement over 42 years. He is the retired Executive Vice President of the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO. He is a Korean War Army veteran. He has served two six-year terms on Polk County Health Services; and 12 years as a board member of Des Moines Area Community College.

[Norma Schmoker](#)

Mrs. Schmoker represents the Iowa Workforce Development Board on the SRC. She resides in Fort Dodge and has served for a year of her second term on the SRC. From a workforce standpoint, Norma is interested in the “untapped resources” that people with disabilities offer. Mrs. Schmoker is a former business owner who employed people with disabilities who she believes were some of her best employees. Norma also has a grandson with a disability. She feels her work on the SRC is a way to ensure that he has a place in the workforce when he is ready.

[Ellen Sokolowski](#)

Ms. Sokolowski resides in Atlantic and represents the Iowa Rehabilitation Association, an advocacy group, on the SRC. Ellen is employed with DVRS in Carroll as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. She was appointed to the SRC in June of 2000.

[LaVerne Tutson](#)

Ms. Tutson is a new appointee to the SRC. She represents the Statewide Independent Living Council.

[Stephen A. Wooderson](#)

Mr. Wooderson has worked in the vocational rehabilitation profession since 1981. He began his career as a counselor, and has served at all levels of supervision and management prior to his appointment as Administrator of the Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services on December 6, 2002.